



# Brownfields Showcase Community

## St. Paul, MN

Outreach and Special Projects Staff (5101)

Quick Reference Fact Sheet

*Brownfields are abandoned, idled or underused industrial and commercial properties where expansion or redevelopment is complicated by real or perceived contamination. In May 1997, Vice President Gore announced a Brownfields National Partnership to bring together the resources of more than 15 federal agencies to address local cleanup and reuse issues in a more coordinated manner. This multi-agency partnership has pledged support to 16 "Brownfields Showcase Communities"—models demonstrating the benefits of collaborative activity on brownfields. The designated Brownfields Showcase Communities are distributed across the country and vary by size, resources, and community type. A wide range of support will be leveraged, depending on the particular needs of each Showcase Community.*

### BACKGROUND

The Brownfields National Partnership has selected the City of St. Paul as a Brownfields Showcase Community. St. Paul has been a leader in brownfields redevelopment since 1980, when the Port Authority transformed a 200-acre brownfields site into Energy Park, creating over 5,000 jobs. The city has identified 17 brownfields parcels, covering more than 1,000 acres. It is estimated that, if redeveloped, the 1,000 acres could provide 13 million square feet of building space, 13,000 new jobs, and \$25 million in new property tax revenues. St. Paul's brownfields are scattered throughout the city, but are concentrated in the federal and state Enterprise Communities (ECs). St. Paul has encouraged job creation and opportunity for local residents as an integral part of brownfields redevelopment by requiring business residents for 60% of their new positions and pay a minimum wage of \$8 per hour.

In 1988, Minnesota passed the first brownfields legislation in the nation. Four years later, the state enacted the Minnesota Land Recycling Act, granting liability protection for voluntary parties who cleaned up sites to appropriate levels. Under the jurisdiction of the Land Recycling Act, St. Paul has worked closely with the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency's Voluntary Investigation and Cleanup program to issue "Certificates of Completion" and remove the threat of liability from potential investors/developers.

### CURRENT ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

#### Community Profile



St. Paul, Minnesota

The St. Paul Port Authority utilizes a proven development process to transform the city's brownfields into new buildings and guaranteed jobs. Based on earlier successes, St. Paul expects that redevelopment of the city's 1,000 acres of brownfields will create as many as 13,000 new jobs and \$25 million in annual property tax revenues.

St. Paul has brought together a number of focus groups and forums to advance brownfields redevelopment. The Polluted Lands Task Force educates business owners on brownfields and business opportunities. The Lenders Roundtable on Brownfields meets monthly to involve banks and other financial institutions in brownfields cleanup and redevelopment. Community development corporations, district

planning councils, and the city come together regularly in a community visioning process to plan for cleanup and redevelopment of brownfields properties. Local grassroots organizations are working with the Port Authority to advocate better job training for East Side residents, bringing together social justice and economic development. Highlights of St. Paul's brownfields redevelopment program include:

- Redeveloping more than 100 acres of brownfields properties into business parks;
- Creating a 10-acre green corridor of open space along the Mississippi River and the 30-acre Crosby Lake Business Park from the redevelopment of a former tank farm. When completed, the business park will create 505 new jobs;
- Linking the Crosby Lake Business Park to St. Paul's East Side with additional bus lines; providing access to new jobs for a neighborhood with 17% unemployment,
- Securing financing for the 30-acre Williams Hill Business Park as the anchor for the Phalen Corridor Initiative. When complete, the business park will be home to at least 325 jobs and produce more than \$500,000 in property taxes; and
- Collaborating with local community organizations to select six sites for environmental site assessments under the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Brownfields Assessment Demonstration Pilot.

St. Paul has been designated as an EPA Brownfields Assessment Demonstration Pilot, a Department of Housing and Urban Development EC, and a State of Minnesota EC. Partnerships in brownfields as-

essment, cleanup, and redevelopment have also been formed with the Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration; the Minnesota Departments of Trade and Economic Development, Transportation, and Commerce; and the Metropolitan Council (the local regional governing body).

## **SHOWCASE COMMUNITY OBJECTIVES AND PLANNED ACTIVITIES**

As a Brownfields Showcase Community, St. Paul will continue to be a model to cities struggling to establish the process and identify funding for brownfields assessment, cleanup, and redevelopment. The Phalen Corridor Initiative epitomizes St. Paul's commitment to the integration of brownfields redevelopment and community empowerment. The objective of the Phalen Corridor Initiative is to realize a community vision in the redevelopment of St. Paul's East Side. Phalen Boulevard will be built along abandoned rail lines, unlocking 100 acres of inaccessible brownfields to redevelopment and creating more than 1,000 needed jobs for St. Paul's East Side. The Phalen Corridor Initiative is currently in the community workshop stage, providing various stakeholders with the opportunity to be involved in the brownfields redevelopment process.

### **Contacts**

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For more information on the Brownfields Showcase Communities,  
visit the EPA Brownfields web site at:

**<http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/showcase.htm>**